

Research: The Key to Recognition

by Norma Harnack

At last year's Annual meeting, there was a great deal of conversation centered around getting Touch For Health acknowledged as a legitimate method for promoting the total well-being of people. Many ideas were expressed as to how that could be accomplished. Some people felt that wider recognition of the organization through advertisement would be beneficial. Other suggestions included having more people experience the benefits of TFH, establishing a more formal educational system for teaching the TFH methodology, expressing through written documentation the benefits and changes brought about through the use of TFH. All of these ideas are valid approaches toward recognizing the value of TFH and its application to well-being. It is the opinion of this writer that the most difficult method to put into action would also be the most beneficial. While in the throes of a dilemma all solutions may seem radical and difficult, but in calmer moments of deliberation a more analytical approach can be perceived. For instance, let us consider recognition through advertisement. While this would be costly, it could certainly be effective. Providing a more formal educational system. This could also be costly, and establishing a curriculum would involve study that is not readily available in the current files of TFH. What is left is written documentation. While usually not as costly, the commitment of time and personal effort cannot be measured in monetary value alone. It is the area of written documentation that I want to address.

At last year's annual meeting, Dr. Thie put out a call for written documentation. His request implied that you document and submit to the TFH Foundation your results achieved utilizing TFH. He also requested your personal testimony of the results achieved while using TFH. He shared stories relating to the success of

TFH in catastrophic diseases. He suggested that we begin documenting episodes of results, especially in the category of catastrophic diseases such as AIDS. I wonder how many of us responded to his request? I wonder how many of us really heard and understood his request or realized the possible implication of such an effort?

Research has long been recognized in the scientific community as the appropriate communicator of fact, fact substantiated by results. By the scientific community, I don't mean to imply the medical community, but any body of knowledge that seeks to verify itself through logical and systematic investigation. This kind of documentation can be classified as research.

Research, according to Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, is a careful or diligent search or "studious inquiry or examination, especially aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts or practical application of such new or revised theories." Who can do research? Anybody, as long as they are willing to follow a few accepted rules for documenting their research. What does it take? In the case of TFH, mostly time and personal commitment.

There are two types of research - basic and applied. Basic, concerns itself with the establishment of new knowledge or facts and the development of fundamental theories which will not always be immediately applicable. Applied research seeks knowledge that is immediately useful and applicable without much delay. While there are many reasons to do research, ours in TFH would probably focus on the evaluation of an approach to well-being through the use of TFH.

How do you start your research project? Document. Your documentation needs to follow seven easy steps in order to be effective:

1. Identify the thing you are researching
2. Collect essential facts pertaining to the thing you are researching
3. State the intended outcome and how you will achieve it
4. Set up a routine method for collecting the data
5. Collect the data
6. Analyze actual outcome in terms of your stated outcome
7. Report the findings.

If this sounds like a lot of work, it is - when attempted on an individual basis. That is why research teams are created. TFH could qualify as one of the worlds largest research teams, if everybody on the "team" would contribute to the overall effort. We know this stuff works, let's prove it!

How can you contribute to this research?

First, be committed. Commit to sending in to the TFH Foundation one letter about your results from TFH within a twelve month period.

Second, set up a format. Your letter can follow the steps outlined for creating research data. For example:

1. Identify the thing you are researching. I used Edu-kinesthetics to assist a person in achieving their weight loss goal.

2. Collect the essential facts. The person I worked with is female, age 42, 5'6" tall and weighed 280 lbs. She has been diagnosed as clinically obese and sought various types of medical and non medical help for her condition. She can be contacted for verification because I asked her permission to use her in a letter to the TFH Foundation reporting the results achieved.

3. State the intended outcome. Our goal was to lose 41 lbs in 20 weeks.

4. Set up a routine for collecting the data. We decided to work together once a week for the twenty weeks balancing to achieve the goal of weight loss. (Here you

might describe in detail the type or the way you went about doing the balance.)

5. Collect the data. The first three weeks she lost 16 lbs! The next seventeen weeks were not as easy as we encountered plateaus and underlying issues revolving around her losing weight but at the end of twenty week she had lost 42 1/2 lbs.

6. Analyze the outcome. Using the methods learned from my Switching on class, a 1500 calorie diet, and a very low exercise regime she was able to lose weight for the first time in her adult life.

7. Report the findings. Put your letter in an envelope and address it to the TFH Foundation , put a stamp on it and put in in the corner mailbox. You will have contributed immensely to the TFH Foundation.

Although this may seem like a very simple application of research it can be the foundation to spur on more serious research into what we all know about TFH, and that is that it works!

We will be holding a special forum for nurses on how to do research utilizing Touch For Health.

Reference

Notter, Lucille E., *Essentials of Nursing Research*, Springer Publishing Company, Inc., New York, 1978